

Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House

August 8, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Mr. President, as you know, the first words of the Preamble to the Constitution state “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility...” The terrorism of white supremacy and gun violence is an assault on that tranquility, and indeed on the very character of America.

It is with deep sadness and great urgency that I write following the horrific loss of life that occurred in Gilroy, El Paso, Dayton and Chicago, after which you said, “I think background checks are important. I don't want to put guns into the hands of mentally unstable or people with rage or hate, sick people. I'm all in favor of it.” Mr. President, we have an opportunity to work in a bipartisan way to pass gun violence prevention background checks. However, Leader Mitch McConnell, describing himself as the “grim reaper,” has been an obstacle to taking any action.


Today, as Speaker of the House, I am writing in good faith to request that you call the United States Senate back into session immediately under your powers in Article II Section 3 of the Constitution to consider House-passed bipartisan gun violence prevention legislation.

One of the first acts of the new Congress was to pass the Bipartisan Background Checks Act (H.R. 8) and the Enhanced Background Checks Act (H.R. 1112). H.R. 8 simply expands the existing background checks law to include guns sold at gun shows, online and through person-to-person sales. Commonsense background checks are supported by more than 90 percent of the American people and are proven to save lives. H.R. 8 was so named because it was passed eight years after the deadly attack on Congresswoman Gabby Giffords that stole six lives. The House also passed H.R. 1112, closing the dangerous Charleston loophole that enabled the tragic hate crime at Mother Emanuel Church that killed nine devout parishioners engaged in worship.

Thank you for your attention to my call to honor the Constitution's Preamble which states America's purpose, and its provision that enables the President to bring the Senate back into session.

This extraordinary moment in our history requires all of us to take extraordinary action to save lives.

Sincerely,

  
NANCY PELOSI  
Speaker of the House